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## Multicultural literacy pdf

The ability to understand and appreciate the parallels and differences between customs, values, and beliefs of your culture and a different culture. Loading PreviewSorry, preview is currently unavailable. You can download the paper by clicking the button above. Multicultural literacy refers to the skills involved when uncovering bias in regards to culture, as well as the ability to take different perspectives to gain a more humane perspective. It is important for students to be multiculturally literate because Canada itself is very multicultural. Students need to be able to take the perspectives of different cultures to allow themselves to grow into responsible citizens, who consider other people's opinions. One of the challenging classes to incorporate multicultural literacy is physical education and health. Where would you even begin? @MrsJeynes did a great activity with her class that involved multicultural literacy. The full lesson plan was not posted, but she did share a picture of her students presenting different genres of dance which originate from different cultures. This activity can be integrated with other subject areas. For instance, it can be connected to language arts, where students can research the chosen culture and communicate their findings. In addition, students can write a reflection piece about the research and dance experience. In social studies, students can compare their chose culture to the culture being studied in class ( For example, Ancient Egyptians, pioneers, vikings etc). The purpose of this activity would be to allow students to take the perspective of different cultures. Students will gain a sense of why certain cultures have traditions that meet their needs and wants. This activity can even be extended to health class, where students can research ethnic foods that pertain to their chosen culture. They can answer why these foods are so prominent in that culture (for example, in Mexico tortillas are made from corn flour because corn grows in Mexico). Students can also assess the nutrition value of their chosen ethnic dishes. Students gain a sense of why cultures eat the foods they do, and will build and appreciation for ethnic cuisines. Loading PreviewSorry, preview is currently unavailable. You can download the paper by clicking the button above. Australian primary schools are more culturally diverse now than ever before. By including multicultural literature in the school library fiction collection, teacher librarians ensure they provide their students with texts that represent the culturally diverse classrooms and home environments in this country, and those across the globe. With recent global events, it has become increasingly important that students do not become ethnocentric. Exposure to a variety of multicultural literature can assist in breaking down cultural barriers. What value does multicultural literature add to the school library fiction collection? Multicultural literature serves as a powerful tool in enabling students to gain a better understanding of both their own culture and the cultures of others. Through this deeper knowledge, relationships can be strengthened, bridging the gap between students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Hseu & Hetzel, 2000). As students of the 21st century are global participants, it is important that they possess cultural sensitivity. Through extensive research, Norton (2009) has discovered that when students can relate global events to the themes, conflicts and characterisations found in multicultural literature, it helps them to better understand current world issues. Students therefore develop greater cognitive skills as they learn to engage with and critically evaluate the texts that they read. Suzanne Evans (2010) conducted research on critical literacy using a range of multicultural picture books. Her aim was to determine whether student perspectives on diversity and the acceptance of others altered once they were exposed to multicultural texts. Evans concluded that exposure to multicultural literature increased students' awareness of the various social practices, values and belief systems of other cultures. These themes are a major focus in the Australian Curriculum, with a general capability strand dedicated to intercultural understanding, which is incorporated throughout each of the key learning areas. Promotes empathy and unity Multicultural literature fosters positive self-esteem and prevents students from feeling isolated. It has the ability to nurture respect, empathy and acceptance among all students (Steiner et al, 2008). Whoever You Are (Fox, 1997) is an older publication that illustrates perfectly how multicultural literature can promote unity among different cultures. The story highlights the fact that all children feel the same emotions no matter where they live in the world, what language they speak, or how they look. It suggests that although people have many differences, there are common traits that unite us. Another text that focuses on commonalities is Mirror, written by Jeannie Baker (2010). The design of this book is unique, as two storylines sit side by side and are to be read simultaneously. This picture book is about the day in the life of two boys: one who lives in Australia, and the other in Morocco. It eloquently reveals the external differences and inner similarities that define their lives. This book teaches children that they should not be fearful of those who may seem different to them, as their daily lives and routines may be very much the same. Promotes cross-cultural friendship Multicultural literature promotes the interaction of children across differing ethnic backgrounds (Steiner et al., 2008). Stories portraying cultural diversity can foster the belief that race is not a barrier, but rather a contribution to the beauty of our multicultural world. This ideal is portrayed in Kobald's My Two Blankets (2014). A young girl named Cartwheel relocates to a westernised country to escape the war that is occurring in her homeland. She feels lost and lonely until she meets a young girl in the park. Over time their friendship develops and the young girl helps Cartwheel to understand her new world. This theme is mirrored in Just One Wish, a lovely story by Sally Rippin (2009) about overcoming diversity. Penny, a new arrival to Australia, initially struggles with the English language and feels alienated until she befriends her hearingimpaired art teacher, Mr Whitthorse. Helps students look critically at the world Multicultural literature can help students develop global awareness by introducing them to current cultural issues. When students vicariously experience the feelings and emotions of others through literature, they are encouraged to look critically at the world and gain a greater understanding of the global community (Monobe & Son, 2014). Texts such as Ziba Came on a Boat (Lothouse, 2007), The Little Refugee (Do & Do, 2011) and Mahtab's Story (Gleeson, 2008) are representative of actual events. The main character in each story is a refugee who immigrates to Australia with their family via an old, overcrowded fishing boat. These books reveal the hardships that refugees often experience when seeking a place of safety. They allow students to reflect upon and critically analyse the issue of asylum seekers and the idea of a fairer community. John Marsden portrays the above issues in a unique and thought-provoking manner in his book Home and Away (2008). This compelling story is about a typical Australian family who must flee their country when it is ravaged by war. This story presents a complete role reversal, as it is Australians who are being displaced. This text forces students to think critically and consider global issues from a different perspective. Encourages identity formation Multicultural literature can also assist students with their identity formation (Hseu & Hetzel, 2000). Identity formation is important in the social development of all children, as it gives them a sense of belonging and acceptance in society. Inclusion of multicultural literature in library collections confirm that the beliefs and experiences of minority students are valued (Steiner, 1998). When students see themselves reflected in the pages of literature, they are more likely to engage with a text. Smith's (1995) case study confirms this, revealing that African- American students prefer to read texts they can relate to culturally, increasing their interest in reading. Familiar concepts in multicultural literature help to build security, familiarity, and confidence, which can lead to an improvement in student learning (Agosto, 2007). What is the role of the teacher librarian? There are important characteristics that teacher librarians should consider when selecting multicultural literature to include in their school library fiction collection. Firstly, cultural contexts should be accurately depicted in the books by the presentation of correct and current information. It is important that teacher librarians find texts that portray the life of unique individuals and avoid stories that reinforce stereotypes. The dialogue in the book should also be considered, as it should accurately represent culturally-specific oral traditions (Landt, 2006). Teacher librarians should also consider the power play within texts to ensure subservient roles between cultural groups are not illustrated. It is important to ensure that multicultural literature is not isolated, but incorporated in library activities and throughout the library program. ASLA & ALIA (2004) suggest that an effective teacher librarian provides professional development opportunities for other teaching staff. By working together to organise units that include culturally-diverse literature, teacher librarians and classroom teachers ensure that multicultural themes are woven throughout the curriculum. Once multicultural literature is seen as an integral component of the curriculum, libraries and classrooms can become safe arenas for open discussions on culturally sensitive topics (Dietrich & Ralph, 1995). Online digital resources There are numerous online resources that can be used to engage students and extend their literary experiences. The International Children's Digital Library provides free access to quality digital multicultural and multilingual texts from around the world. This resource offers a great extension to the school library fiction collection, especially for bilingual students. And then I was a refugee... is an interactive tool that explores real-life scenarios faced by refugees. The aim of this application is for students to discover the refugee experience, demonstrating the crisis experienced by millions of people every year. Along their journey, students must make critical choices and learn about the results of their actions. Conclusion Creating a culturally diverse library collection and instilling its use throughout the school curriculum helps to build a school community that is supportive, empathetic and accepting of others. Multicultural literature creates a sense of belonging, forging a connection between home and school environments, and across cultures. Multicultural literature serves many purposes, but its greatest accomplishment is its ability to bring people closer together, regardless of culture and ethnicity. 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Using Children's Literature and Drama to Explore Children's Lives in the Context of Global Conflicts. The Social Studies, 105(2), 69-74. Norton, D. E. (2009). Multicultural children's literature: through the eyes of many children (3rd ed.). Boston: Allyn & Bacon/Pearson. Smith, E. (1995). Anchored in our literature: Students responding to African American Literature. Language Arts, 72(8), 571-574. Steiner, S. F. (1998). Who Belongs Here? Portraying American identity in children's picture books. Multicultural Review, 7(2), 20-27. Steiner, S. F., Nash, C. P., & Chase, M. (2008). Multicultural Literature That Brings People Together. Reading Teacher, 62(1), 88-92. Image credits CC0 Public Domain. Image sourced from www.pixabay.com Most American citizens are proud of our "melting pot" status. After all, how many of us refer to ourselves as one ethnicity or another, and not just an "American"? It is a source of familial pride for us. Even African Americans, who do not always have an Ellis Island story in the family tree, find collective strength in the stories of their ancestors and what it means for their lives today. While this blending of cultures can most definitely be a blessing—it can also be a curse. With more diversity than ever, teachers have to adjust methods from one student to the next, and from one year to the next. Multicultural education is about more than a classroom with varied skin color - it includes careful examination of the neighborhoods, parenting styles and general experiences that shape each and every K-12 student. In this article, I want to take a look at several ways to encourage a real multicultural education in our schools. Define multiculturalism. Multicultural education is a progressive approach for transforming education based on educational equality and social justice. The components required in educating a multicultural education are content integrations, prejudice reduction, empowering school culture and social culture. These all relate and all require attention as they relate to the efforts of conflict resolution in today's world. What kids learn in their classroom environments when it comes to interactions with those who are different from them translates into how well they will manage life in the global marketplace. In the last century, there has been an increase in global mutual acceptance of opposing views and different cultures - though arguably, there is still a long way to go. Specifically when it comes to America, it is crucial that multicultural education exist with the increasing number of students who speak a second language and come from somewhere else. Diversity exists even within mainstream society and students need to have the communication life skills that multicultural education promotes. Observe your students closely, and value your real-life experience of diversity over the textbook version. David Kolb created a four-step model for really understanding the needs of a particular student group. He starts with concrete experience, adds reflective observation and then moves to abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. In other words, multicultural education cannot be taught in a textbook. It must be developed by each educator based on a particular student group. Learn your students' learning styles. Teachers can help students discover their academic strengths by helping them discover their own learning style. In this way, students discover what method of comprehension works best for them based on their own backgrounds and personalities. If educators make this learning style quest a class project, an inherent lesson in multiculturalism is taught. Encourage your students to be proud of their heritage. Educators should look for ways to emphasize the differences between students in a positive light. This might mean writing essays on family background or partnering with other students to help each other develop projects that accent the culture of the other. This can include prompts that look back on family history for generations, or could ask students to look at their current family setup. Be aware of your biases. In order to fully understand the significance of multiculturalism in the classroom, educators must first thoroughly examine their own cultural beliefs, values, and biases. Then prospective educators are ready to begin learning about other cultures-to become familiar with their values, traditions, communication styles, learning preferences, contributions to society, and relationship patterns of their future students. While some of this education can be achieved by simply reading about cultural diversity, it is difficult to truly substitute for genuine interaction and discourse with members of students' cultures. While book knowledge about diverse cultural groups can come in handy to a certain extent when designing lesson plans and educational materials, one of the most important reasons for truly learning about the cognitive patterns of cultural groups is so that the interpersonal attitudes and behaviors of diverse students can be effectively interpreted in terms of the culture that they're entrenched in. Traditional teaching environments force students from those and other groups to modify their thought and behavior patterns to fit standard European-American norms or else face academic and behavioral consequences. In a culturally responsive classroom, the onus is instead placed on the instructor to learn about and adapt to the cultural intricacies of the students that they teach. Create assignments that celebrate multiculturalism. If used cleverly, classroom assignments can provide a primary window into a student's cultural beliefs. Writing assignments can play a significant role in gathering information about student thought patterns and tendencies. Interviews with family members, assignments asking students to write about learning experiences that occur outside of school, and assignments involving family stories and traditions all can play a significant role in unearthing information about a students' cultural heritage. Students' parents can often be solicited as sources of useful personal information and visiting the neighborhoods where diverse students live can help give educators an idea about the level of social support present and the types of challenges that the student might face outside of the classroom. There are tons of ways that educators can approach multiculturalism in K-12 classrooms but the first step is recognizing its importance. How do you adjust to and promote multiculturalism in your classrooms?

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